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THE
SPEECH
OF
Patrick
DOCTOR DUIGENAN,

DELIVERED IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF THE

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT,

MAY 10, 1805,

IN THE

DEBATE ON A PETITION

PRESENTED IN THE NAME OF THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS OF IRELAND,

BY THE

HON. CHARLES JAMES FOX.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. HATCHARD, BOOKSELLER TO HER MAJESTY,
NO. 190, OPPOSITE ALBANY HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

1805.

ADVERTISEMENT.

DR. DUIGENAN'S Speech upon the Roman Catholic Petition having been either totally omitted, or grossly misrepresented, in the several newspapers, it becomes necessary thus to lay it before the Public.

The friends of the **BRITISH CONSTITUTION IN CHURCH AND STATE** will find ample cause of satisfaction in the manly support which it received from Dr. Duigenan; his perfect knowledge of Ireland and Irish Romanists will inform Englishmen upon a subject in which they are vitally concerned, but which they have too little considered: his deep research will gratify the historian, while his irrefragable chain of argument will demonstrate to every honest mind, that to change our present system so far as it concerns Romanists, would be to shake the very pillars of the state. If indeed there be any amongst us who wish to

overthrow our establishment, who are ready to bow to foreign usurpation, religious or political, and to lay the honours of our country in the dust; if there still remain any of the herd of Jacobins, anarchists, or atheists, who have already brought so much misery upon mankind—to them the Doctor's Speech will be gall and wormwood; they will not fail to honour it with the epithets, *illiberal*, *antiquated*, and *bigoted*; but the Church of England and her defenders are not bigoted or illiberal; unlike the Church of Rome, she neither persecutes nor anathematizes any other form of worship; but pitying and lamenting the ignorance, superstition, and crimes of Romanists, she has indulged them in every thing but **HER OWN DESTRUCTION.**

S P E E C H,

&c.

MR. SPEAKER—SIR,

I HAVE read the Petition now before the House, and the list of names subscribed to it; they amount in the whole to ninety-one persons: of these, six are Peers, three are Baronets, the rest untitled Commoners. Of the six Peers, one is an English as well as an Irish Peer, who has no property in Ireland, and is an Englishman both by birth and residence. The Petition is thus entitled: “ A Petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, whose names are thereunto subscribed, in behalf of themselves and of others His Majesty’s Subjects professing the Roman Catholic Religion.” With what propriety this English Peer can be styled a Roman Catholic of Ireland I shall not take upon me to determine. Of the remaining five Peers three may be said to have been created during His present Majesty’s reign. Lord Kenmare claimed a peerage under a patent of King James II. dated after the abdication of that unfortunate prince, at a time

when he was no longer a king, and could not create nobility: His present Majesty has been pleased to create him a Peer: The ancestors of two others, the Lords Fingall and Gormanstown, were attainted for high treason on outlawries; which attainders continued for four generations. His present Majesty was graciously pleased to direct his Attorney General in Ireland to confess error in these outlawries, on which confession the outlawries have been reversed, and these noblemen have been restored to the rank of their ancestors. Lord Southwell's ancestors were Protestants; his father some time since went to France, and there became a Roman Catholic, and educated his son in that profession. Thus it appears, that the whole Roman Catholic Nobility of Ireland, a few years back, did not exceed one or two at the most. I speak not this out of any disrespect to the noble personages thus mentioned, but to shew what little cause of complaint there is for the alleged degradation of the Roman Catholic Nobility of Ireland. Of the three Baronets subscribed to the Petition two have been created by His present Majesty. Ireland is divided into thirty-two counties: out of nineteen of these counties there is not one subscriber; and out of four of the remaining thirteen counties there is but one each. There is not the name of one Romish ecclesiastic subscribed to this Petition. How then does it appear that these Petitioners are

commissioned by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, or those of England and Scotland, to petition on their behalf, or to express their political or moral principles? It is much to be suspected that they are self-commissioned, as well by what is already observed, as by the following circumstance: five of the subscribers have set themselves forth as delegated by the rest to procure the presentment of this Petition to the two Houses of Parliament, and solicit its success: of these, one is Mr. Denys Scully, Barrister at Law, a gentleman with whose person I am totally unacquainted, but not so with his writings. He published in the year 1803 a pamphlet in Dublin, entitled, "An Irish Catholic's Advice to his Brethren how to estimate their present Situation, and repel French Invasion, civil Wars, and Slavery." This pamphlet advises the Irish Romanists, in the event of an invasion by the French, rather to join the King's standard than that of Bonaparte, solely on the ground of such conduct being more for their advantage, and not at all on the ground of their allegiance due to their Sovereign: and notwithstanding the specious title of the work, the whole tenour of it is, in my opinion, by the suggestion of ideal grievances, in the most horrid forms; to excite the Romish populace to the most furious acts of insurrection and revenge against their governors; so that the advice to resist Bonaparte seems to be merely an artifice to protect the author from the legal punishment

due to so malignant, vindictive, and atrocious an attack on the conduct of the Protestant Government of Ireland for two centuries past. The pamphlet overflows with gall : it will be sufficient to read a passage or two out of it to give the House a just idea of its real purpose and tendency :

“ It is one hundred and twelve years since the capitulation of Limerick to William III. : it was the last place in Ireland or England that surrendered to him ; and never was any place more gallantly and obstinately defended than Limerick had been by our *loyal* ancestors, who with Sarsfield at their head fought for their hereditary King James against a Dutch invader and his hired battalions.”—Page 12, Dublin edition.

Writing of the gallant army which went to Ireland to punish the Irish rebels and murderers of 1641, he has the following passage :

“ You see what misery that army caused here : their tailors, tinkers, smiths, cobblers, drummers, and trumpeters, after the slaughter of one hundred thousand persons, obtained various estates and lands amongst us.” It is to be remarked that the superior officers of this gallant army thus reviled by Mr. Scully, were the chief instruments in restoring Ireland to the monarchy of England, and that their descendants at this day compose a most considerable part of the Irish nobility and gentry.

In another place Mr. Scully calls the Irish Par-

liament a Club, and the place of their meeting their Club-house. In another place he gives the following character of the person he styles the first magistrate: "That he may be liable, like the master of a family, to fits of anger, and caprice, and prejudice; that he may naturally be at times obstinate, ill-humoured, improvident, or even infatuated upon some particular subjects." And adverting to the Coronation Oath, and to His Majesty's scruples on the score of that Oath, respecting the demands made by the Irish Romanists, he undertakes to apologize for His Majesty, and to express his hope that the King will change the opinion which it is generally understood he has entertained. "It is not," says he, "to be imagined that a quibbling crotchet in an oath will circumscribe the justice of the beneficent father of his people."—Can it therefore be imagined that Mr. Scully is a person specially commissioned by the Roman Catholics of Ireland to solicit the success of a Petition to the representative body of the nation, claiming a right to be put upon an equal footing, in respect to political privileges, with all other His Majesty's subjects, and demanding such boon on the score of their alleged loyalty and attachment to the State?

The Petition contains a long state of what the Petitioners allege to be their political, moral, and religious principles, and openly asserts that such principles are not only conformable to their opi-

nions and habits, but are expressly inculcated by the religion they profess; yet this Petition is not subscribed even by one ecclesiastic of that profession. I shall state to this House what I conceive to be the reason that the Romish ecclesiastics have declined to subscribe it. There are two oaths prescribed by the Irish statutes to be administered to Romanists; one, by an Act of the Irish Parliament in the year 1773; the other, by an Act of the Irish Parliament of the year 1793. Such Romanists as decline to take the oath of the year 1773, which is nearly the same with the oath prescribed to be administered to the English Romanist by the English Act of the year 1791, are not entitled to the benefit of the several Irish laws repealing what is styled the Popery Code in Ireland; it is therefore incumbent on all Irish Romanists to take the oath of 1773, to entitle themselves to the benefit of such repeal: but they are not under an equal necessity of taking the oath of 1793; for it is merely a qualification-oath, which, if they obtain places under Government, or tender their votes at elections for Members of Parliament, the law requires they should take, but not otherwise.

The oath of 1773 is an oath of allegiance to the King: it contains an engagement to disclose all traitorous conspiracies; abjures the Pretender, and the doctrine that no faith is to be kept with heretics, and that princes excommunicated by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their sub-

jects; renounces the temporal jurisdiction of the Pope, and declares that it is taken without equivocation, in the ordinary sense of the words.

The oath of 1793 goes much further, and renounces the infallibility of the Pope; the power of the priest to give absolution unconditionally; the intention of subverting the present church establishment, and substituting a Romish establishment in its stead; of overturning the present arrangement of property in Ireland, and of using the power and privileges demanded by the Romanists to weaken the Protestant religion and Protestant government in Ireland; and, so far as it relates merely to religious principles, is the same oath which was drawn up and prepared by a Committee of English Romanists in the year 1790, to be offered to the then English Ministry as a proper oath to be tendered to all English Romanists; and the taking thereof to be sanctioned by an Act of Parliament. This oath three out of the four Apostolic Vicars, the special agents and emissaries of the Pope in England, reprobated and anathematized by an encyclical letter, dated London, Jan. 12, 1791, and commanded all the English Romanists to reject this oath, and stated in their letter that they thus acted with the approbation of the Apostolic See, and of all the Romish Bishops in Scotland and in Ireland. These Apostolic Vicars had so much influence with the English Ministry in 1791, that they prevailed

upon them to omit from the oath by statute prescribed to be taken by the English Romanists, the abjuration of the Pope's infallibility, and of the doctrine of unconditional power of absolution in the priest. It is also to be remarked, that all the professors and members of the College of Manooth in Ireland are by an Irish statute exempted from the obligation of taking the oath of 1793. This is a College founded by Government for the education of Romish priests.

From what I have mentioned, I conceive that the Petition's containing a declaration against the Pope's infallibility, and the doctrine of unconditional power of absolution in the Romish priesthood, is the reason why no Romish ecclesiastic has subscribed it.

The Petition prays that all statutes now in force against Romanists (that is, all statutes requiring them to take tests as qualifications for offices and seats in Parliament) may be repealed, and they may be restored to the full enjoyment of the benefits of the British Constitution, equally and in common with their fellow-subjects throughout the British empire:—this they claim as matter of justice and public utility. It is very remarkable, that this measure thus demanded upon the grounds of justice and public utility, is the very measure which King James II. attempted to force upon the nation, and for which attempt he forfeited the crown handed down to him by a

long and illustrious line of ancestors; and that the reasons given by him for his attempt are the very same reasons pleaded by the Petitioners and their advocates for the justice of their demand; to wit, “that it would cause and promote a brotherhood of affections and a conciliation of religious differences;”—“to render the nation happy at home, and formidable to foreign nations.”—See his Declaration for general liberty of conscience, the letter left upon his table previous to his flight to France, and his speech to his pretended Popish Parliament in Ireland after his abdication. If his attempt was just, and the measure for the public benefit, it follows that he was unjustly dethroned; and the direct consequence of that is, that His present Majesty’s title to the throne is an unjust one. Let this House determine whether such doctrine is or is not consistent with loyalty.

I shall oppose the motion for submitting the consideration of this Petition to a Committee; and in doing so, I shall enter fully into a discussion of the broad and general question before the House, whether the prayer of this Petition should be granted or rejected; as I think it is a question of the greatest magnitude which has been debated in this House since the Revolution.

The Petitioners have particularly stated that the principles, religious, moral, and political, set forth in their Petition, are expressly inculcated by the religion they profess: it will be therefore incum-

bent upon me specially to examine the principles taught by their religion, as they are laid down by their own writers ancient and modern, and as they are warranted by the uninterrupted practice of their church for ages. It will, however, be first necessary to examine how and in what manner they are disqualified from enjoying offices and occupying seats in Parliament.

The only obstacle at present to the occupation of seats in the two Houses of Parliament by the members of this sect, arises from the laws enjoining the taking of the Oath of Supremacy, and repeating and signing the Declaration against Transubstantiation, &c. by all Members of the two Houses of Parliament, previous to their taking their seats and voting in either House: with which injunction if Romanists complied, they would be as capable of occupying seats in Parliament as Protestants.

This injunction they obstinately refuse to obey, and thereby exclude themselves.

If indeed they would offer to take the Oath of Supremacy, there might be some plausible arguments adduced for the repeal of the parts of these Acts which enjoin the repetition and subscription of the Declaration against Transubstantiation, &c.; because that is a declaration against certain doctrinal points held by Romanists, which do not immediately tend to a disavowal of the supreme authority of the state, so far as to countenance

or command a resistance to the civil magistrate, and is a matter of opinion only, unconnected with the Government : but their rejection of the Oath of Supremacy is an open avowal, that they do not admit the state to have any just power to compel their submission to its laws, in any point of temporal government, intimately and inseparably connected with the administration of the supreme power in spiritual matters ; that is, in other words, they refuse and reject an *oath of allegiance* to the state, and insist that there is an extraneous power paramount to that of the state, to which their allegiance is due in all spiritual matters, or in all matters which that power shall deem spiritual ; and in all temporal matters which are inseparably connected with such spiritual supremacy, which amount to nearly one half of the whole temporal power of a state ; and may indeed swallow up the whole, which it has attempted in many countries : because the determination of what portion of dominion, in temporal matters, is within the vortex of spiritual supremacy, is left to a foreign ecclesiastic, and his vassals the Romish priests, within this empire. The Pope never did claim any temporal power, save under the pretext, that it was inseparably annexed to the supreme spiritual power, and a consequence of it. What immense temporal power he claimed, and in fact exercised within this realm, under such pretence, let our histories

and statutes declare; the fourth Lateran general Council shews the extent of the authority over temporal princes and their dominions claimed by the Pope.

The qualifying subjects, who hold so anarchical a doctrine *as a point of faith*, to become part of the supreme power, by admitting them to a share of the supreme legislative authority in a Protestant state; and that too a state, the most powerful part of whose supremacy is lodged in a popular assembly, is in its own nature an absurdity, and must, if effected, be attended with the most ruinous consequences to the constitution.

Before I proceed farther, it will be necessary to put Gentlemen in mind of the Oath of Supremacy (which we have all taken) by repeating it:

“ I do swear, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that princes excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, or any authority of the See of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or by any other person whatsoever; and I do declare, that no foreign prince, prelate, state, or potentate, hath or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God.”

The Oath of Supremacy was originally framed in the reign of King Henry VIII. merely as

an oath of allegiance; the usurpations of the Pope then becoming intolerable in England, he claiming and exercising a power over the subjects, under the mask of spiritual power, or as inseparably annexed to it, equal to the power of the Crown at least, and in many cases paramount to it, and subversive of it. See preambles to the statutes of the 24th Hen. VIII. ch. 12, 25; 25th Hen. VIII. ch. 21; 26th Hen. VIII. ch. 1; 32d Hen. VIII. ch. 38; and the Irish statutes of the 28th Hen. VIII. ch. 13; 2d Eliz. ch. 2.

By this oath, in its original form, the King was declared to be the *only supreme head on earth* of the Church of England and Ireland.

This clause was objected against as an acknowledgment of a sacerdotal power in the King; to obviate this, he took care to declare publicly, that he claimed only a civil supremacy; *that he made no pretensions to any sacerdotal power; that his supremacy was not that purely spiritual power which is lodged in the church, but a temporal supremacy over all the spiritual power of it within his own dominions.*

All the great officers of the state, bishops, and nobility, within his realm (two excepted—Sir Thomas More, and Fisher Bishop of Rochester), took this oath.

Romanists were then better subjects than they are at present!

The objection, however, being still urged by

the partizans of the Court of Rome, Queen Elizabeth, at the commencement of her reign, changed that clause in the oath, and inserted in its room, "that the King (or Queen) is the only supreme governor of this realm, as well in spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes, as temporal; and that no foreign prince, state, or potentate, hath or ought to have," &c.

To guard against any perverse interpretation of this oath, she published injunctions, wherein she declared, "that she pretended to no priestly power; that she challenged no authority, but what was of ancient time due to the imperial crown of England; that is, under God, to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within her dominions, of what estate, whether ecclesiastical or temporal, soever they be, so as no foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them." The Romanists, however, by the anathemas of the Pope, were so changed for the worse, and their obligation of fidelity to their prince and country so loosed since the reign of Henry, that they universally rejected this oath, though simply an oath of allegiance to their natural sovereign.

On the accession of James II. a bigoted Papist, he, finding himself invested by this oath with the supreme governance of the established Church, was induced by his bigotry, in direct breach of his Coronation Oath, to use this authority for

the subversion of the established Church; and this danger to the Church, from the monarch's being invested with such power, was noticed by the sagacious patriots who conducted the Revolution; and on that glorious event they determined to rescue the Church from such peril, and expunged from the Oath of Supremacy the clause "that the King is the only supreme governor of this realm, as well in spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes, as temporal;" so that the subject is now only bound to swear, by the Oath of Supremacy, to the independence of the empire on any foreign power; and it is merely and simply an oath of allegiance to the state: in fact it was always so, and such as no subject, who is not a traitor, can conscientiously refuse; it is, as it now stands, completely purged of all reasonable, or even plausible objection: it never was an oath of exclusion, or even of restriction, unless of traitors; it is absolutely, strictly, and literally conformable to the ancient and acknowledged common law of the realm. That ancient common law is acknowledged, repeated, and recognised, in the preamble of the statute of Præmunire, enacted in the 16th of Richard II. at the time this kingdom was in communion with the Romish Church: that statute recites, "that the crown of England hath ever been free, and subject to none, but immediately unto God; and the laws and statutes of this realm ought not to

be submitted to the Bishop of Rome, to be defeated at his pleasure, to the destruction of the King, his crown, and his regalia, and of all the realm, which God defend." This was the voice of the people in open parliament at that time. See the statute, Carte's Ormond, vol. i. from page 36 to 43. See also Davis's Reports, Case of Præmunire.

The Romanists of this day complain of the laws which enjoin the taking of this oath, declaring that they cannot in conscience take it, that it is to them an exclusive oath, as they cannot sit in Parliament without taking it; and they and their abettors (among whom in this point they muster all the Jacobins in the country) desire to have these laws repealed. They plead thus: We are from conscience traitors to our country; we maintain that our country is subject to a foreign power; we are always ready to support the authority of that foreign power in every possible way, by arms or otherwise, and to bow down our country to its authority: we therefore demand the repeal of the laws which oblige us to swear allegiance to the constitutional governing powers of our country; which repeal will be a national acknowledgment of the dependance of our country on, and its subjection to, a foreign tribunal. It will enable us to procure seats in the great supreme council of the nation; and confer power on us to betray the

independence of our country. The Pope and all our Divines assure us, that we are bound in conscience to do so, when we shall procure power. Dr. Troy, our Archbishop of Dublin, an eminent dignitary of our church, in his Pastoral Letter, published in 1793, has told us, “that it is a fundamental article of the Roman Catholic *faith*, that the Pope or Bishop of Rome is successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, in that see: that he enjoys by divine right, a spiritual and ecclesiastical primacy, not only of honour and rank, but of real jurisdiction and authority in the universal church: that Catholics cannot conscientiously abjure the ecclesiastical authority of the Bishop of Rome: that Henry VIII. of England was the first Christian prince that assumed ecclesiastical supremacy, and commanded an enslaved Parliament to enact it as a law of the state, and that the Catholics consider it as an *usurpation*.” Pursuant to this doctrine, we the Catholics will endeavour, by every means in our power, to free ourselves from that *usurpation*; and pray, good Protestant *usurpers*, assist us in doing so! put us into a capacity of effecting it! that is, of betraying our common country to dependence and slavery!

The patrons of this measure argue *that the sentiments of Romanists are changed for the better from what they were formerly*. It is already shewn that if they have suffered any change since the

reign of Henry VIII. the change has been for the worse, and that they now avow greater hostility to the constitutional independence of the nation (justifying that hostility upon principle) than they did at that period.

But to give a clear and explicit refutation of this argument, it will be necessary to expose the avowed principles of the Romish religion in respect to temporal governments; to inquire whether they have been ever disavowed, and whether any material change has been effected in them at any, and what period.

And first, it is necessary to state, that all Romish Bishops, and among the rest His Majesty's subjects now resident in the British dominions, under the denomination of titular Archbishops and Bishops (who, in direct defiance of the laws, assume the titles of *Most Reverend* and *Right Reverend*, being the titles of real Archbishops and Bishops of this realm), at their respective consecrations swear an oath of allegiance to the Pope, which is utterly inconsistent with their duty to His Majesty and the State. Among other clauses (all exceptionable) are the following: "that they will from that hour forward be faithful and obedient to St. Peter, and to the holy Church of Rome, and to their *Lord* the Pope, and his successors, canonically entering: that the papacy of Rome, the rules of the holy fathers, and the *regality* of St. Peter, they will keep,

maintain, and defend against *all men*. The rights, privileges, and authorities of the Church of Rome, and of the Pope and his successors, they will cause to be conserved, defended, *augmented, and promoted.*" Another clause in the oath is, "that heretics, schismatics, and *rebels* to the Holy Father and his successors, they will resist and persecute to their power." This clause Dr. Troy states to be now omitted in the oath of Romish Bishops, in countries not in communion with the Romish Church, at the instance of the late Empress of Russia, who made that a condition of her permitting a Romish Bishop to reside within her dominions. If such be the case, the oath is sufficiently hostile to a Protestant government without it.

I shall next repeat an extract from the oath taken by all Romish Priests at their ordination.

"Fifthly, the Holy Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, I acknowledge to be the mother and mistress of all churches; and to the Roman Pontiff, successor of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Vicar of Jesus Christ, I promise and swear true obedience.

"Sixthly, all doctrines delivered, defined, and declared by the *sacred canons* and by the *general councils, and especially by the most holy council of Trent*, without the smallest doubt I receive and profess; and whatsoever is contrary thereto, and all heresies condemned, rejected, and anathe-

matized by the Church, I equally condemn, reject, and anathematize.

“Seventhly, *This true Catholic faith, out of which there is no salvation, which at present I freely profess and sincerely hold*, I do promise, vow, and swear that I will most constantly retain and conserve inviolate, with God’s help, unto the last breath of my life; and that, as far as in me lieth, I will be careful that it be held by, taught, and preached to my *subjects* *, or those the care of whom shall belong to me in my function.

“SO HELP ME GOD.”

The next evidence of the principles of the Romish religion, in respect to temporal governments, which it is proper to adduce, is the decrees of the fourth general Lateran Council, held under Pope Innocent III. in 1215, in its third chapter. This council consisted of four hundred Bishops, and eight hundred other fathers.

“These decrees assert the power of the Church (that is, of the Pope) of disposing of the dominions of kings and princes, commanding temporal lords to purge their dominions of heresy under pain of excommunication, absolving their subjects from their allegiance, and exposing their dominions to the invasion of Catholics; denouncing against kings, rulers, and subjects,

* All Romish Priests call their parishioners subjects, in Latin *subditi*.

guilty or even suspected of heresy, or inactivity in detecting and punishing heretics, the most terrible temporal punishments, such as *confiscation, banishment, torture, and death*; declaring that no faith is to be kept with heretics, nor conventions nor agreements made with them; or if made, that they were *nullities* in themselves, and that no communication of any kind is to be held with them."

The Council of Constance in 1415, the subsequent Council of Basil, and the famous Council of Trent, of later years in the sixteenth century, all confirmed the decrees of the Lateran Council, particularly in respect to heresy. That of Constance, in conformity with the decrees of the Lateran Council, compelled Sigismund, King of the Romans, to break his faith with John Huss, and deliver him up to the Council, contrary to his faith and safe-conduct, declaring "that no safe-conduct given to a heretic under what covenant soever, by any Emperors, Kings, or other secular princes, ought to exempt such heretic from the judgment of his competent ecclesiastical judge, who may punish him, though he come to the place of judgment, confiding in that safe-conduct, without which he would not have come;" and John Huss was condemned for heresy by that Council in its twelfth session, and burned alive in its fifteenth.

In conformity with the decrees of the Council

of Lateran, Pope Pius V. excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, and absolved her subjects from their allegiance: his bull for that purpose was afterwards renewed and confirmed by his successor Gregory XIII. Pope Clement IX. in conformity with the same decrees, issued his bull, enjoining the English Romanists to do their utmost to keep out the Scottish heretic (so he styled King James I.), that he might not in any wise be admitted to the kingdom of England, unless he would reconcile himself to Rome, *and hold his crown of the Pope*, and conform himself and all his subjects to the religion of the Roman Church*.

It is to be remarked, that all these bulls were issued, not from the private ambition of the Popes and Court of Rome, but in direct conformity with the injunctions and decisions of the general councils of the Romish Church.

Charles VI. Emperor of Germany, executed the treaty of Alt' Radstadt, and thereby granted certain privileges to some of his Protestant subjects, and entered into some covenants with the Protestant Princes of the Empire. Pope Clement XI. in a letter to that Emperor, dated June 4, 1712; writes thus: "We by these presents denounce to your Majesty, and at the same time by the authority committed to us by the most omnipotent God, declare the above-mentioned

* See Carte's Ormond, vol. i. p. 33.

covenants of the treaty of Alt' Radstadt, and every thing contained in it which are any wise obstructive of, or hurtful to, or which may be said, esteemed, pretended, or understood to occasion or to bring, or to have brought the least prejudice to, or any ways to hurt or to have hurt the Catholic faith, divine worship, the salvation of souls, the authority, jurisdiction, or any rites of the Church whatsoever, together with all and singular matters which have followed, or may at any time hereafter follow from them, to be and to have been, and perpetually to remain hereafter *de jure*, null, vain, invalid, unjust, reprobated, and evacuated of all force from the beginning, and that no person is bound to the observation of them or any of them, *although the same have been repeatedly ratified or secured by an oath*; and that they neither could nor ought to have been, nor can nor ought to be observed by any person whatsoever."

The Pope's Legate at Brussels, in the year 1768, when an oath was in contemplation in Parliament to be taken by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, writes to Ireland in the following manner respecting that oath:

That the abhorrence and detestation of the doctrine, that faith is not to be kept with heretics, and that Princes deprived by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, as expressed in that proposed oath, are absolutely in-

tolerable, because, as he states, those doctrines are defended and contended for by most Catholic nations, and the Holy See has frequently followed them in practice. On the whole he states, that as the oath is in its whole extent unlawful, so in its nature it is invalid, null, and of no effect, inasmuch that it can by no means bind or oblige consciences.

It is now time to come to authorities still more modern in this point, and those of men of the Romish persuasion in high credit with our Ministers. Doctor Troy, the Romish Archbishop of Dublin (who at this day openly assumes and uses the arms of that Archbishopric, surmounted with a Cardinal's cap, from whence I presume him to be a Cardinal), in a treatise which he entitles a Pastoral Letter, published by him in London and Dublin so late as the year 1793, asserts, "*that all Roman Catholics consider the express decisions of their general Councils, as infallible authority in point of doctrine.*" And Dr. Hussey, who informs us that he is Romish Bishop of Waterford, appointed by the Pope, in a pamphlet styled a Pastoral Letter, published by him in London and Dublin in 1797, not only holds the same doctrine, but forbids all Romanists, under pain of excommunication, to permit any of their children, under any pretence, to resort to a Protestant school: in the same pamphlet he addresses the Romish soldiery, and exhorts them by no means

to obey their officers in any orders relating to spiritual concerns, without particularly specifying what he means by spiritual concerns, but reserving the interpretation to himself and the Romish priesthood; and stating, that if any officer should enforce obedience to his orders relating to spiritual concerns, such officer might feel the effects of such conduct in the day of battle; that is, the Romish soldier might then turn upon, and assassinate him, or desert to the enemy.

It is very proper to remark here, that Doctor Hussey was, within these very few years, sent over to Ireland by the British Ministry, under the protection of the English Secretary of State in Ireland; and was made President of a most magnificent College (infinitely more grand, and of more expensive foundation, than any College in His Majesty's dominions) then founded and endowed for the exclusive education of Romish priests in Ireland by the Government, and by express directions of the British Ministry; that is, for the perpetuation of Popery and disaffection in so great a limb of the British empire! and that Doctor Troy, during the Lieutenancy of the Marquis of Cornwallis in Ireland, was in great credit at the Irish Court.

An English Romish priest of the name of Milner, who as I understand is one of the four Apostolic Vicars in England, in a very recent publication has taken some pains to inform his

Sovereign or future Sovereigns how far he or they may be bound by the Coronation Oath; and states, "that every human law and every promise or other engagement, however confirmed by oath, must necessarily turn upon the cardinal virtue of prudence;" which implies that it depends as to the obligation of fulfilling it in such and such circumstances on the question of *expediency*. I believe the Protestant subjects of this empire have no great occasion to apprehend that His present Majesty will consult this casuistical Romish divine on cases of conscience.

After this exposure of the present Romish religious principles, so radically hostile to the temporal government and established constitution of the British empire in church and state, of such antiquity, of such indisputable authority, *and of such recent avowal*, let the supporters of the present measure inform the House, at what period, and by what public authority, did the Romish church or its votaries renounce or disavow these principles, or any and which of them.

It is notorious they never did; their rejection of the Oath of Supremacy, simply an oath of allegiance avowing the independence of the state, their anxiety to have the law enjoining the taking of it repealed, amount to a full confession and avowal of the Romanists, that they have not in any shape changed those principles.

It has been frequently and confidently asserted by Romanists and their abettors, that the doc-

trines held by them respecting the supreme jurisdiction in spiritual matters, and its residence in a foreign tribunal, can never affect the temporal authority and jurisdiction in this, or in any other country.

What has been already advanced is sufficient to refute this assertion; but it is proper to add, that the supreme jurisdiction in spiritual matters does draw into its vortex a very large share of temporal power, as inseparably annexed to it, and incorporated with it, even though we exclude a vast portion of temporal jurisdiction claimed by the Romanists as adhering to the supreme jurisdiction in spirituals, which in fact does not belong to it, nor is incorporated with it. In proof of this, let the preambles of the several statutes heretofore enacted in this kingdom, for abolishing the Pope's usurped jurisdiction in spirituals, be referred to: they particularize the vast portion of temporal authority inseparably annexed to the exercise of supreme jurisdiction in spirituals. (See the Preambles of the Acts of the 16th Richard II.; 24th Henry VIII. chaps. 12, 25; 25th Henry VIII. chaps. 20, 21; 26th Henry VIII. chap. 1; 32d Henry VIII. chap. 38; Irish Acts of 28th Henry VIII. chaps. 13, 19; 2d Elizabeth, chap. 1.) These Preambles recite the great mischief done to this empire, "by appeals made to the See of Rome in causes testamentary; causes of matrimony and divorces; right of tithes, oblations, and obven-

tions ; by intolerable exactions for bulls, delegacies, and rescripts, in causes of contention ; as well as for dispensations, licenses, and faculties, in an infinite number of cases.”

Matrimony is held by the Roman Catholics to be a sacrament, and the cognizance of it to belong to the spiritual jurisdiction. This, in many cases, would confer a jurisdiction on the Pope as supreme head of the Church, of deciding whether a man was the lawful heir of his father, and entitled to his real and personal estate ; and whether a woman was entitled to dower ; with several other temporal concomitants. Excommunication is a matter of spiritual jurisdiction ; and the tyranny exercised over the property and other temporal concerns of the laity by the Romish priesthood in Ireland is terrible almost beyond description. Auricular confession and absolution, by giving them the dominion over the consciences of men, confer a mighty power in temporal matters upon them ; and Bonaparte, though a fierce unprincipled tyrant and usurper, was so well convinced that the supremacy in spirituals would essentially contribute to the support and establishment of his temporal power, that he procured himself to be crowned by the Pope as supreme head of the Church.

In favour of the measure of investing Romanists with political power in the British empire, it has been urged, that the doctrine of the supre-

macy of the Pope in spirituals is not attended with any ill consequences at present, and affords no subject of complaint to the temporal power, in any state in Europe, Popish or Protestant; though in all Popish states, and in many Protestant, Romanists are admitted into places of power and trust.

The plain answer to this is, that all the Popish states in Europe, previous to the anarchical progress of the recent French revolution, were either despotic monarchies, or equally despotic oligarchies, and that the people at large had no political power in them. The despot, or aristocratic rulers, insignificant in number when compared with the population of the state, possessed the whole political power; and no person, professing a different religion from that of the state, was permitted to enjoy any political power. The great mass of the people, being excluded from all manner of power or influence in the state, were, what Englishmen term, slaves: and every question which could arise from the claim of Papal supremacy in such states, was decided by the despots and the Court of Rome.

As these despots were themselves of the Romish persuasion, no controversy could happen between the temporal and spiritual jurisdictions, on the score of heresy or difference in religious opinions: the spirituality could never have occasion to put in execution the tyrannical decrees of the Lateran.

Council against the despots themselves ; and these despots actually became the executioners of the judgments of the spirituality, on such of their enslaved subjects as presumed to question any tenet of the Romish superstition : or they permitted the spirituality themselves to execute them : in respect to any other points of temporal jurisdiction claimed by the spirituality, as annexed to the supreme jurisdiction in spirituals, it became the interest of the despots to acquiesce in part in them, and thereby to attach the interest of the clergy to their own domination, well knowing that superstition can give strong support to despotic power, by inclining the people to submit to slavery ; and the temporal and ecclesiastical powers found it their mutual interest to unite themselves, to ensure and continue the submission of the people.

In Protestant despotic states it is not of great moment to the despot, what religious opinions are held by a part of his subjects : the people have no power in the state, and it is of little consequence to the despot whether the men he employs as his servants are of one religious persuasion or the other, they being merely his creatures, and extinguishable at his pleasure. But in Protestant states, in which the people, or their elective representatives, have some share in the government, Romanists were excluded, before the baneful progress of the French revolution, from all share of

political power. The Swiss confederacy, composed of a league of small Protestant and Romish states for their mutual security, is a strong instance of this: in the Protestant cantons no Romanists were admitted members of the senates, or even to any places of trust or confidence in the state: a similar regulation took place in the Romish cantons with respect to Protestants. In the United Provinces, so often cited as models of toleration, though all sects were tolerated, yet civil offices were only enjoyed by professors of the established religion: "*It was not there considered as a punishment on men to be excluded from public offices, and to live peaceably on their own revenues and industry.*" (See Hume's History, vol. viii. page 274.) Romanists were also excluded in Holland from seats in the assembly of the States General.

If therefore the British empire is to be influenced by the practice of every popular Protestant state in Europe, Romanists should not only be excluded from all places of trust and power, but from all situations which would invest them with any share of political power; and above all from seats in the supreme legislative assemblies, the Houses of Lords and Commons.

But the very Constitution of Britain is such, as renders the exclusion of Romanists from seats in the legislative assemblies not only expedient, but of absolute imperative necessity. In the British empire the supreme legislative power rests in the

King, Lords, and Commons; the Commons being the representatives of the great mass of the people, or the democracy; the Peers the representatives of the richest and most dignified part of the people, or of the aristocracy. In these two assemblies, but particularly in the House of Commons, vastly the most powerful of the two, is vested the greatest and most efficient part of the sovereign power of the state: and to admit the avowed enemies of the Constitution in church and state, to form a part of the sovereignty of the state, is so manifestly an absurdity in politics, that it is surprising such a measure should be supported by men of ability professing themselves to be friends of the Constitution.

As it has been more than once openly and confidently asserted by an able Member * of this House, that the exclusion of Romanists from the Houses of Lords and Commons is an unjust invasion of their natural rights, it is necessary here to repeat what has been already mentioned, that Romanists exclude themselves, by their rejection of the Oath of Supremacy; an oath enjoined to be taken, not by them alone, but by all Members of the Houses of Lords and Commons, not being in its own nature an oath of exclusion, but an oath of allegiance to the state, abjuring all foreign jurisdiction: and their rejection of this oath amounts to

* Mr. Charles Fox.

an avowal, that they are in principle traitors to the state, in acknowledging a foreign jurisdiction. The argument by which this able Senator supports this opinion is, that all members of the state are by natural right entitled to an equality of political power, so far as a capability of enjoying all the honours, emoluments, and privileges of the state, according to their respective abilities: that no member of the state should be curtailed of any of these privileges for any opinions he may entertain or promulge, be they ever so traitorous or hostile to the Constitution, unless he attempts by some overt act to carry them into effect; for that opinions are not objects of laws, but actions only. But though it be admitted that private opinions are not properly the objects of criminal or disqualifying laws without overt acts, are not the dissemination of opinions traitorous and hostile to the Constitution, and attempts to proselytize people to such opinions, overt acts, and the objects of penal and restrictive laws in the British empire? A man may keep destructive poisons in his closet, without becoming obnoxious to the operation of any penal or restrictive law; but if he publicly vends or administers them, the laws restrain and punish him. It is also a fact, that preventive laws in the British empire, the wisest of all laws, do make opinions their objects, and fix disqualifications, not only on the maintainers of opinions, but also on those who may be reasonably sus-

pected of holding certain opinions. For instance, revenue-officers are by Act of Parliament disabled from voting at elections of Members of Parliament; and by the Place Bill, certain classes of placemen and pensioners are disqualified from sitting in Parliament; persons, not possessed of 300*l.* per annum of landed estate, are disqualified from representing a borough, and those not possessed of 600*l.* per annum from representing a county, in Parliament: on what ground is it that so many persons are curtailed of their privileges? is it not on the suspicion, that their particular interests will inspire them with opinions adverse to the interests of the state, and that they will vote in conformity with such hostile opinions, if admitted to the enjoyment of such privileges? Romanists whose opinions are openly and avowedly hostile to the state, are in a better condition than the already mentioned respectable classes of society: by taking the oaths administered to all members of the legislative body, they may sit in Parliament: not so with the classes mentioned; they are absolutely and irrevocably excluded.

This doctrine of natural rights, besides what is already mentioned, may receive the following full and decisive answer. Man from his very nature, is a gregarious animal; there is no instance in nature of savage solitary man; society is necessary for his preservation and the continuance of the human race; therefore no right can be properly

termed a *natural* right, which is not also a *social* right; or, in other words, the rights of society are natural rights: if therefore any man, or class of men, claim privileges as natural rights, utterly inconsistent with the well-being, and even existence of the society, or political state, of which he is a member, such claim is to be utterly rejected, as not being properly a claim of a natural right; or if of a natural right in a solitary state of nature (such a state being supposed to exist), certainly not a claim of right to be admitted by the society of which he is a member; because it tends directly to the destruction of the society, and all claim of presumed right must yield to the paramount claim of real social right, the preservation of the state. Away then with the claim of Romanists to seats in both Houses of Parliament as their natural right!

It is here fit to remark, that Romanists cannot derive any support to their exertions and those of their abettors, for the repeal of the acts enjoining the taking of the Oath of Supremacy, from this doctrine, that opinions without overt acts are not the objects of legislation; because the overt acts of our own countrymen, and others, professors of this cruel and unrelenting superstition, for the purpose of subjecting the British empire to a foreign jurisdiction, since the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, have been too frequent, flagrant, and notorious to be denied.

Witness the bulls of Pope Pius V. and his successors, for the dethronement and assassination of that Queen and James I.; the conspiracies of her own Romish subjects, in conformity with these bulls, for her assassination, and that of her successor; the projected Spanish invasion; the Gunpowder Plot; the desperate Romish rebellion and horrible massacre of the Protestants of Ireland in the reign of Charles I.; the obstinate and destructive rebellion of the Irish Romanists in the reign of William III.; the recent atrocious rebellion in Ireland, and the unprovoked murder of thousands of Irish Protestants, men, women, and children, in cold blood: in extenuation and excuse of which rebellion and massacre, all the malevolence and falsehood of the whole Republican, Jacobinical, Frenchified faction in England, have been ever since employed; in too many instances with a pernicious and even a fatal effect.

In justification of the present proposed measure, pleas of merit in the modern race of Romish subjects have been advanced; and first, that they have conducted themselves peaceably and *loyally* ever since the Revolution, though under the pressure of rigorous, impoverishing, and disqualifying statutes; and a great Minister of State* has been so far deluded by the misrepresentations and falsehoods of Romish advocates and emissaries,

* Mr. Pitt.

as to declare himself a patron of their claims, on the score of their *patience and forbearance* for a century past. Secondly, it has been asserted, that the Irish Romanists heartily concurred in the measure of union of the two nations (though it was opposed by the Irish Protestants), and by their power, influence, and interest, not only contributed to the success of that great measure, but were the chief instruments of it. The truth of these two pleas I will separately examine, and reply to them both.

The first is a plea of loyal and peaceable conduct of the Romanists of the empire since the Revolution.

When the Romish scheme of subversion of the Protestant establishment in church and state, under the conduct, patronage, and influence of the bigoted monarch who then swayed the British sceptre, was completely defeated by the spirit of the nation (raised and directed by the renowned William III.), but through the medium of a bloody civil war, from the obstinate resistance of the Irish Romanists, the political power and consequence of the Romanists in Great Britain were annihilated, and in Ireland reduced to a very low ebb. In Great Britain their dwarfish number, compared with the gigantic multitude of Protestants, ensured the political impotence of the sect; but the case was different in Ireland: the Romanists exceeded the other subjects in number in that country (though

not in the magnified ratio stated in their own inflated accounts), which prevented their sinking into political impotence. Yet their decisive defeat at that period reduced them to great political imbecility: though fallen to the earth in both kingdoms, their reiterated conspiracies and rebellions induced the state to guard against their acquisition of new strength after their fall, Antæus-like: hence sprung the system of what are called Popery laws in both kingdoms enacted since the Revolution. These laws, by Popish writers, and the abettors of Popery throughout the empire, are represented as most oppressive and unjust; and as the *causes* of the notorious disaffection of the Romanists to the state, and of their conspiracies, massacres, and rebellions; but this is a gross misrepresentation; for that part of the code particularly complained of as unjust and oppressive, was enacted in the reigns of William and Ann, after their conspiracies, massacres, and rebellions, had been plotted and executed, and therefore was the *effect*, and not the cause, of their notorious disaffection and treasons. And these laws could not have been the causes of the last rebellion and massacre in Ireland, for they were all repealed prior to that rebellion and massacre. The Popery code was nearly the same in both kingdoms.

These wise laws (for wise and provident they were, notwithstanding the false and clamorous declamations of Romanists and their abettors

against them) prohibited Romanists from the *acquisition of landed property, political influence, and power, in both countries*; and thereby disabled them in a great measure from disturbing the state, in conformity with their avowed principles. Whilst these laws remained unrepealed, the Romanists were more peaceable subjects than they now are, because it was not in their power to be otherwise: the maniac in a straight waistcoat, or the tiger in a cage, can do no mischief, yet deserve no commendation for their gentleness. The British Ministry, influenced by active and able Romish agents*, and imposed upon by the grossest falsehoods and misrepresentations (which have had a powerful effect on them, from their own absolute ignorance of the true state of Ireland), have, for these twenty years last past and upwards, exerted all their influence in the Irish Parliament to procure the repeal of these laws, session after session, and have in a great measure succeeded, though they have not yet procured the repeal of the Popery code in England in the same degree. In this respect they treated the Irish nation in the way that condemned malefactors have been sometimes treated, on whom dangerous experiments in physic and surgery have been tried, before their general application is sanctioned to the public. The English Mi-

* Particularly the late Mr. Edmund Burke.

nistry, not content, in the year 1793, with procuring a bill to pass in the Irish Parliament, for repealing all the laws which disabled Romanists to vote at elections of Members of Parliament, prefaced the bill with an assertion I cannot admit, to wit, that the conduct of the Romanists had been loyal. Whoever will take the trouble of turning to the Irish acts of the 19th of George II. of the 29th of George II. and to all the acts passed in Ireland for twenty years preceding the year 1793, for the suppression of the petty rebellions of the White Boys and Defenders, all Romanists, who have from time to time infested and desolated several parts of Ireland, committing the most atrocious acts of treason, will be clearly convinced that the Irish Romanists have no good claim to the character of loyal subjects, from the time of the Revolution to the era of their late rebellion.

But supposing it were admitted, for argument's sake, that Romanists have been generally peaceable subjects, from the Revolution till a few years before the breaking out of the late rebellion (loyal it cannot be pretended that they were, their avowed principle of the subjection of the nation to a foreign yoke being disloyal), they can derive no merit from such peaceable demeanour: the Popery code rendered their submission to the laws a matter of necessity; they were peaceable because they were disabled, in a great measure, from exerting their avowed hostility to the Con-

stitution by the efficacy of the Popery code; and nothing more clearly demonstrates the truth of this conclusion than this fact, which cannot be denied, that they have advanced in their march of sedition and treason at the same rate of progression, as the English Ministry proceeded in Ireland with the repeal of the Popery code; and they broke out into open rebellion, and commenced a massacre of the Protestants of Ireland, very shortly after a great part of that code was repealed, and they were admitted to an equality of civil privileges with Protestants, the capacity of sitting in Parliament, and enjoying some great civil offices, excepted.

Can any circumstance carry a more decisive proof of the wisdom of the Popery code, and of the folly of repealing it, than the actual consequence of that repeal just mentioned? and can any thing be more clear than the insufficiency of the claim of merit of Romanists, on the score of their peaceable and loyal conduct since the Revolution? Loyalty certainly they never had the slightest claim to; their avowed religious principles are disloyal. To peaceable conduct their claim is also ill founded in general; and where it has any foundation, it entitles them not to the gratitude of the state, because it was not the effect of choice, but of imbecility; and that the effect of the wise system of laws, the repealed Popery code.

It may not be here improper to quote a passage out of the speech of the late Earl of Chesterfield, at the opening of the Irish Parliament in the year 1745, he being then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to shew the opinion entertained by that able statesman, and the Government he then served, of the Popery laws.

“The measures (said he) that have been hitherto taken to prevent the growth of Popery, have, I hope, had some, and will still have a greater effect; however, I leave it to your consideration, whether nothing further can be done, either by new laws, or by the more effectual execution of those in being, to secure this nation against the great number of Papists, *whose speculative errors would only deserve pity, if their pernicious influence on civil society did not both require and authorize restraint.*”

The second plea of merit of Romanists, to wit, that they supported in Ireland the great measure of an union of the two kingdoms, and by their exertions effected it, is as void of foundation in fact, as the former. Every one, who has the smallest acquaintance with the history of Ireland, must acknowledge, that the whole body of Irish Romanists, from the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth to the present time, has directed all its exertions to the separation of Ireland from England. Such separation was and is the point to which Irish Romanists have uni-

formly directed all their conspiracies, all their massacres, all their rebellions, all their political views and measures. The Irish Protestants, on the contrary, were always firmly attached to Great Britain, and always looked to Great Britain for protection, countenance, and support; being ready at all times to expend the last shilling of their property, and spill the last drop of their blood, in defence of the just rights of the British empire. The whole body of Protestants till a few years back, and a very great majority of them since, were ambitious of uniting the nation indissolubly to Great Britain by an incorporating union; and by their representatives in Parliament actually petitioned the Crown to procure such an union in the reign of Queen Ann; which petition was then, with unaccountable haughtiness, rejected. But the Irish Romanists, so late as the year 1795, proclaimed their hostility to that measure. In the spring of that year, the representatives of the whole mass of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, chosen from every considerable district, city, and town in that kingdom, by open, popular election, assembled at St. Francis's Romish chapel, in the city of Dublin. In this assembly the most treasonable speeches, stuffed with the most virulent invectives against the British nation, and the most lavish praises of the French revolution, stigmatizing the war against the French regicides with the epithet of an *impious crusade*,

and exhorting the nation to a separation from Great Britain, were uttered by several of the leading and popular Romanists. The assembly entered unanimously into several factious and treasonable resolutions. It was surmised at this assembly, that an union between Great Britain and Ireland was then in the contemplation of Government, though no such measure had been announced; and one of the unanimous resolutions was the following: “*Resolved, that we pledge ourselves, collectively and individually, to resist even our own emancipation, if proposed to be conceded on the ignominious terms of an acquiescence in the fatal measure of an union with Great Britain.*” By the unanimous vote of this assembly, consisting of above fifteen hundred men, representatives of all the Romanists of Ireland, these resolutions, together with abstracts of the speeches of the principal demagogues among them, were published in most of the factious papers, both in Great Britain and Ireland. Here then is proof positive of the hostile sentiments of the whole mass of Irish Romanists, not of any partial body of them, to the measure of an incorporating union of the two nations so late as the year 1795.

Their declarations against the measure did not stop there: in the year 1799, as soon as an Union was proposed by Government, a meeting of the Romanists of the city of Dublin was convened by their leaders at the Royal Exchange;

at this meeting, a very general one, they entered into violent resolutions against an Union, which they published as usual in the factious papers both in England and Ireland. The same line of conduct was pursued in several other parts of Ireland, though this hostility of the Irish Romanists to an Union was perfectly impotent, the political imbecility of the whole sect, particularly after the suppression of their then recent rebellion, rendering them incapable either of promoting or obstructing the measure; yet the English Government in Ireland condescended to negotiate with the party, and endeavoured to procure signatures of the dregs of the people of that persuasion to papers and addresses in favour of the measure. Several addresses of this kind appeared in the Government prints; the names of wretches who could not write their names, appeared as if they were subscribers to such addresses. The very gaols were canvassed to procure subscribers, and multitudes of names appeared, as the names of real subscribers to these addresses, though persons of such names did not exist in the places from which the addresses were stated to have been sent: in short, with all the activity and intrigue of Government, no considerable body of Romanists throughout the kingdom could be procured publicly to avow their approbation of the measure.

It is admitted, that many honest men, and

good subjects at this side of the water (utterly ignorant of the state of Ireland, and of Irish affairs) have been duped, by the grossest falsehoods and misrepresentations, into an approbation of the measure now in debate ; and that there is a difference of opinion among men of that description respecting it ; but among demagogues, republicans, and infidels, there is no difference of opinion on it. They are unanimous in its support ; and their unanimity on the point should induce all loyal subjects, who have been deluded into an opinion of its utility to the state, to re-examine the grounds of their opinion, and the authenticity of the information on which they formed it.

It is fit to be remarked, that the first decisive step of the French revolutionists in their career of anarchy, was the subversion of their church establishment, which led immediately to the subversion of their civil government. The consequence of the proposed measure, if adopted, will be the same in the British empire ; it therefore meets the approbation of all the Jacobins in it.

To demonstrate that Irish Romanists neither gave, nor could give, any assistance to the measure of an incorporating Union, it is only necessary to state a known matter of fact, which is, that a great majority of the Irish Parliament would never have agreed to an incorporating Union with Great Britain, if any hint had been

given, or had it even been suspected, that the present measure would be attempted, after an Union had taken place. I call on the persons concerned on the part of Government in conducting the business of the Union in the Irish House of Commons to deny this fact, if they can; for my own part, I can truly aver, that, instead of warmly supporting the measure of an Union in the Irish Commons, I would have opposed it to the utmost of my power, had I suspected that such a measure as the present would have been introduced into the Imperial Parliament, in the event of an incorporating Union taking place; and I know many Members of the Irish Commons, supporters of the Union, who would have decidedly opposed it, had they any suspicion of the present measure being one of its consequences: in short, a great majority of the Irish Commons would have done so. One principal argument made use of by all the agents of Government to the Irish Members to induce them to agree to an Union was, that all hostility of the British Cabinet to Irish Protestants, and all further encouragement and support of Irish Romanists, would for ever cease, on an Union between the two countries taking place, because all inducement to such a species of policy would then for ever cease. Could any British subject ever suspect that in the reign of a Prince of the House of Brunswick, a measure would be pro-

posed in a British Parliament, the attempting of which cost the unhappy James II. his crown, expatriated him and his posterity, and caused a breach in the hereditary succession of our kings, always a serious evil in an hereditary monarchy? Astonishing, that what our kings could not even attempt with impunity, should be, after a lapse of one century, daringly attempted; and that too under the reign of a Prince, whose sole title to the crown rests on a principle, directly adverse and opposite to the principle of this measure! His title is a Protestant title, and, thanks to Heaven! our Monarch is a Protestant, a sincere one, and bound by his oath, and as strongly by his principles, to maintain the Protestant religion as by law established. This measure directly tends to the sapping of his title; for if it is just and advantageous to the state, now to invest Romanists with equal political privileges with Protestants, it was equally so in the reign of King James II.

Such a measure, now that an Union between Great Britain and Ireland has taken place, is more mischievous to the British empire, than it could have been in the reign of James; because in his reign few Romanists could obtain seats in the British Parliament, as their sect was not then; nor is it now, very numerous in Great Britain. But Irish Romanists, if this measure succeeds, will obtain seats in the Imperial Parliament, and

in the course of a few years (as will be presently shewn) above eighty Romanists, out of the hundred Irish Commoners, will obtain seats in the Imperial Parliament:—a strong band, indissolubly knit together, who will certainly be allies to every junto of Republicans, every band of Dissenters, in every opposition to Government, unless they shall be gratified to the utmost extent of their wishes, by the utter subversion of the Constitution in church and state. Can any doctrine make more for the purposes and designs of the infidel and republican factions in our empire? Can any measure more directly tend to the subversion of our Constitution in church and state, and the introduction of anarchy, democracy, and infidelity?

It may be justly remarked, that this measure for the elevation and aggrandizement of Popery, following so immediately on the heels of the Romish rebellion in Ireland, and the horrible massacre of the Irish Protestants in the course of it, coupled with the almost general pardon of the principal traitors and murderers, actors in it, if it should be adopted, must, by every reasonable man, be considered as a public reward conferred on Irish Romanists for their rebellion and cruel murder of their Protestant fellow-subjects in cold blood; and that too a reward of the utmost magnitude and value: it is already proved, that it

cannot be esteemed a reward of their merits, for merits they have none.

The favourers of this measure allege, that it is calculated to produce unanimity among the European subjects of the British empire, now more necessary than heretofore to the prosperity and independence of the state, from the overgrown power of France, and (echoing the words of James II. in support of the same measure) *that it will render the subjects of the British empire happy and flourishing at home, and formidable abroad.* But it is demonstrable that the adoption of it will produce the direct contrary effect, and will arm the Romanists with a formidable power, which they will infallibly exercise for the destruction of the state. The religious tenets of Romanists render them irreconcilable enemies to a Protestant state; they must cease to be Romanists before their hostility to such a state can be extinguished: they hold, as infallible doctrines, the decrees of the fourth Lateran Council: they hold as a point of faith, the supremacy of the Pope: they hold themselves bound by all the obligations of religion, to propagate these doctrines by every means of persuasion and force. In conformity with such doctrines they hold, that all people, differing from them in matters of faith, are heretics doomed to eternal perdition; they hold that no faith is to be kept with here-

tics : they hold that no oaths of allegiance to an heretical prince or government are binding. Can the members of such a sect be admitted to share in the government of a Protestant state ? I conceive that no honest man in his reason will answer in the affirmative.

No Protestant state in Europe, in the government of which the people at large had a share, such as the republic of the United Provinces before the late revolution, ever admitted a Romanist, or any person who did not profess the religion of the state, to any portion of political power. No arguments in favour of the measure can be deduced from the employment of Romanists in some departments of the state by Protestant despotic princes ; because in their states the people at large have no political power, and the ministers must implicitly obey the orders of the prince ; yet even in such despotic states, the instances of the elevation of Romanists to great employments are very few, if any.

It may be objected, that Romanists declare themselves ready to swear allegiance in temporal matters to a Protestant government ; and assert, that they hold no such doctrine, as that faith is not to be kept with heretics : and to shew that they look on oaths to heretics to be binding, they argue, that if they did not think themselves bound by such oaths, they would not refuse to take the Oath of Supremacy, the taking of which would qualify

them to enjoy the privileges they are now so ardently in pursuit of. To this it is answered, that the aforesaid doctrine is contained in the decisions of the Lateran Council, a very general one, and so held to be by all Romanists; that the practice of the Court of Rome and of all its vassals and votaries, has been always strictly conformable to such doctrine; that the recent publications of the most celebrated divines of that persuasion, and among others, of Doctors Troy and Hussey, one an archbishop, the other a bishop, and both subjects of this empire, state, “*That Roman Catholics consider the express decisions of their general Councils, as infallible authority in points of doctrine:*” that the rejection of the Oath of Supremacy by Romanists, notwithstanding their taking it would entitle them to great privileges, is no proof that they consider themselves bound by oaths, by which they plight their faith to an heretical government, or to heretics in general; because the Oath of Supremacy contains an abjuration of the supremacy of the Pope, under the title of a foreign prelate; and such an oath their religion will not permit them to take. Doctor Troy, among others of their eminent divines, tells them, “*That Roman Catholics cannot conscientiously abjure the ecclesiastical authority of the Bishop of Rome, the supreme jurisdiction of the Pope in spirituals being a fundamental article of the Romish faith.*” But the express decisions of the Council of Lateran (in

fallible authority with them in points of doctrine) tell them that no faith is to be kept with heretics, and that all pledges of faith given to heretics, by oaths, or otherwise, *are absolutely null and void, consequently are not binding, and ought not to be observed; so that they may take such oaths, and break them at their pleasure, as absolute nullities in themselves:* and such has been the constant and avowed practice of their church.

It is now time to give a general catalogue of the momentous alterations in the British Constitution in church and state, which will be the inevitable consequences of this measure if it shall take place: but it is however first necessary to make a few preliminary observations.

By the Union the number of Irish representatives in the Commons are reduced from three hundred to one hundred; of these, sixty-four are members for counties, and the remaining thirty-six for cities and great towns. All close boroughs, with the exception of one, as I recollect, and the most of the influenced boroughs, are deprived of the privilege of sending representatives to Parliament. By an Irish Act of Parliament in the year 1793, obtained by the intrigues and influence of the British Ministry, and passed in opposition to the opinions of the best informed men in Ireland, Romanists became entitled to vote at the elections of Members of Parliament. Most of the cities and great towns, which retain the privilege of sending Members to Parliament

since the Union, such as Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Derry, Carrickfergus, and Drogheda, are counties within themselves; and a freehold of forty shillings annual value entitles the person seised of it to a vote. Newry and some other towns are pot-walloping boroughs: so that the representatives of the Irish Commons are almost all returned to Parliament by elections merely and purely popular. The right of voting in very few of the towns or boroughs entitled to representation in Parliament is confined to the members of the corporation only; and Romanists, by the aforesaid Irish Act of 1793, are entitled to become members of corporations. The Irish Romanists are in the proportion of about two to one to the Irish Protestants in general; and the proportion among the peasantry of Ireland is greater in favour of the Romanists, than among the other classes of society. The landed estates in Ireland, in the possession of Protestants and Romanists, are in the proportion of fifty to one in favour of the Protestants: but when the bill in 1793 passed, qualifying Romanists to vote for representatives in Parliament, the Protestant landlords almost universally changed the tenures of their Popish tenants; which before were for terms of years, into freehold leases; vainly imagining, that they would always retain influence enough with their Romish tenantry to command their votes at elections. Little did they consider the all-

ruling authority of Romish bigotry over its votaries, as many of them found to their great disappointment at the general election, which first succeeded the year 1793. One gentleman of large landed property, and a representative of a county, informed me, that he and his colleague had every reasonable expectation, from their great landed interest in the county, of being returned members for it without any contest or expense: but a gentleman of very insignificant landed property in the county, unexpectedly declared himself a candidate, and went round to all the Romish chapels, soliciting the votes of the Romanists in the county, and promising, if elected, to support all their pretensions in Parliament. On this occasion the Romish tenants of the gentleman who gave me the information, made freeholders by himself, universally deserted him, and promised their votes to the new candidate; and the Romish priests through the county so effectually bestirred themselves with their votaries in support of the new candidate, that my friend and his colleague were obliged to give a large sum of money to this adventurer to induce him to abandon the canvass, and thereby to save themselves from the fatigue and expense of a contested election. Certain it is, that the whole body of the Romish peasantry, who by the folly and credulity of their landlords have been made freeholders since the year 1793, will desert their interest on every election, when

told by their priests that it is for the interest of their religion that they should do so. In the last Irish rebellion, the Popish peasantry pursued their landlords (most of them very indulgent to their tenants, and from their attachment to Romanists entitled men of liberality) with the utmost fury and rancour, massacring them and their families without mercy, when they fell into their hands. Such has been the frenzy of the Protestant landlords of Ireland, and their ambition of surpassing each other in county interest, that they have made almost the whole mass of the Popish peasantry forty-shilling freeholders since the year 1793; so that the Romish freeholders of that description exceed in number the Protestant freeholders of every description, throughout three parts in four of Ireland: and if this measure shall take effect, Romanists will be returned Members of Parliament for most of the counties at large, counties of towns, and pot-walloping boroughs throughout Ireland: and the principle of representation in the British Constitution, that property should be the basis of representation, will be completely reversed in Ireland, and the basis there will be numbers, not property.

But even in respect of property, the influence of Popery will be daily advancing in Ireland, because, in a commercial country, land is as often at market, and changes hands, as personal property; and landed as well as personal property will, in a

slow but certain progression, creep to that class of the population which is the most numerous. From the foregoing observations it is a just conclusion, that in a very short time, if this measure is effected, eighty at least out of the hundred Irish representatives will be Romanists; and it is fair to conjecture, that twenty or more Romanists will obtain seats in the Imperial Commons for English boroughs, as the whole Romish faction throughout the empire will exert their powers to strengthen their party in Parliament; and some Romish Peers will sit in the upper House. The Romanists will certainly act in Parliament as one body; their union, cemented by religious principle, and the interest of their sect, will smother every seed of dissension among them: all allurements of individual interest will fail of effect, when put in competition with the interests of their religion; their bigotry will bind them together in adamantine bonds; and what their conduct in the supreme legislative council of the empire will be, it is not hard to divine.

The first measure they will unanimously propose, and with unremitting efforts pursue and support, will be the repeal of so much of the Irish Act of 1793, conferring on them the elective franchise, as continues the disability of Romanists without taking the oaths, to fill about thirty or forty of the great offices of the state, in the departments of which is lodged the executive power

of the Government. By the incessant intrigues in Ireland of the English Ministry, the Test and Corporation Acts had been repealed in that part of the empire previous to the Union, with the exception of the above-mentioned great offices of the state: these are the offices of Lord Lieutenant, of Lord Chancellor, of the twelve Judges, of the Commander in Chief of the Army, of the King's Counsel, of Sheriffs, and a few others. If the Minister of the day, at a future critical period, should oppose, or decline to support such a measure, the whole corps will immediately join the Opposition; and the Opposition, to secure the assistance of such numerous auxiliaries, will heartily fraternize with them. In many cases of national distress and difficulty, the ablest Minister, though adverse to their claims, will be unable to stem the torrent; and the part of the Test and Corporation Acts, yet in force in Ireland, will not survive the admission of Romanists into Parliament for many sessions. When the capability of Romanists of filling these great offices in Ireland is once established, will it be practicable to exclude them from occupying them? Certainly it will not. Their dissatisfaction at such exclusion would be greater than at their former disqualification. The great majority of the Irish representatives in the Imperial Parliament being Romanists, aided by the English Romanists, and indissolubly connected, would wring from the

Minister the whole civil patronage in Ireland, and secure all the offices there for their own sect : in fact, the civil establishment in Ireland would become completely Romish.

Would the Romish representatives in Parliament then be contented ? Would their clergy in Ireland, and the mass of their persuasion, acquiesce without murmur in the enjoyment of the ecclesiastical revenues in lands and tithes by the Protestant clergy ? Would they not immediately grasp at them ? If the whole executive power of the state there be committed to Romanists ; if the Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Chancellor, the Judges, Sheriffs, and all the administrators of the law in that nation should be Romanists ; who would warrant the enjoyment of the ecclesiastical revenues there to the Protestant clergy, or maintain their possession of them ? The Minister himself would not be able to secure the laws entitling the Protestant clergy to these emoluments from alteration and repeal, if the great body of the Irish representation in Parliament demanded such a sacrifice, which it would not fail to do. The utter subversion in Ireland of the Church establishment would follow on the heels of the subversion of the civil, and Ireland would immediately become a Popish country.

But would the ambition of the Romish faction in the Imperial Parliament stop here ? Certainly it would not. The tenets of Popery enjoin con-

tinual exertions for its propagation, support, and aggrandizement; and every Romanist would beside have the additional spur of particular interest and ambition, to stimulate him to further exertions on behalf of the sect. The Test and Corporation Acts, being in full force in England, would oppose effectual barriers against the attainment of offices of profit and power in England by Romanists. They would observe, that Scotchmen, by the weight of Scottish representation in the Imperial Parliament, much lighter than that of Irish and Romish representation, had obtained such offices in England, though they had almost engrossed all places of emolument or power in Scotland: they would also observe, that British and Irish Protestants were capable of enjoying offices in Ireland; but that British and Irish Romanists were excluded from all offices of emolument or power in England by the Test and Corporation Acts: they would then loudly complain of this inequality of condition with their fellow-citizens in the British empire, and state that they were excluded from such offices in four fifth parts of the British empire, and admitted only to the full privileges of citizens in the one fifth, without having any exclusive privilege even in this one fifth. If the Minister of the day stood in need of their assistance in Parliament, as he often would, he must listen to such complaints, and listen with attention and favour: circumstances

might compel him to join them in their efforts to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts; and if he should determine to support these remaining bulwarks of the Constitution, they would join the whole herd of republicans, who have so often reprobated these statutes, and attempted their repeal. Two attempts of this nature, one in 1789, the other in 1790, must be in the recollection of many Members of this House: it required all the abilities of the able Minister, who at that time principally conducted the business of the nation, to defeat them. If the party which made these attempts shall be reinforced by above one hundred Members, steady and determined in their hostility to these two statutes, who can answer for their continuance as part of the law of the empire for any length of time? They will undoubtedly yield to the incessant mining and continued assaults of a determined, vigilant, and insidious enemy, constantly recruited by the venomous offspring of infidelity, republicanism, and jacobinism: the Constitution, in church and state, will infallibly sink under the combined pressure of such a chaotic mass of desolating innovation.

The attempt to obtrude this measure on the nation, is, in fact, but the rehearsal of the first act of the Gallic tragedy on the British stage. The introduction of members of all sects into the Gallic National Assembly was followed immediately by the subversion, or rather extinction, of

their national religion; and that by the complete subversion of their government, and the substitution of the most barbarous despotism which ever ravaged and deformed any region of the civilized world. *Principiis obsta*: let us firmly resist all approaches of the ferocious monster, *Gallic anarchy!*

Britons, it is necessary to call to your recollection, and set before your eyes, the statutes, the repeal of which must precede, or inevitably follow, the adoption of this measure; because such display will convince you, that this measure and its consequences directly tend to the complete subversion of your constitution, which has been improving from the commencement of the reign of the glorious Elizabeth, till its attainment of its present unrivalled excellence! under which you and your ancestors for two centuries have lived and flourished; and which has descended as an inheritance, during that period, in succession from father to son!

The statute of the first of Elizabeth, enacting that all public officers shall take the Oath of Supremacy: that of the first of William and Mary, or the Bill of Rights, new-modelling the Oath of Supremacy, and extending the sphere of administration of that oath: the acts of the thirtieth of Charles II. ch. 2, and the first of George I. ch. 13, enacting, that no Member shall sit or vote in either House of Parliament, till he hath,

in the presence of the House, taken the Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy, and Abjuration, and repeated and subscribed the Declaration: the act of the thirteenth of Charles II. called the Test Act, requiring all public officers to take the above oaths, repeat and subscribe the Declaration, and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of England: and the act of the twenty-fifth of Charles II. ch. 2, called the Corporation Act, incapacitating all persons from being elected officers of any city or corporation, without their having, within a twelvemonth previous to their election, received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of England; and also requiring them to take the above-mentioned oaths:—all these acts must be repealed! all the fortifications, erected for the safety and preservation of our Constitution in church and state for two centuries, must be levelled with the dust.

Judge Blackstone, an able and constitutional lawyer of modern days, states, that the acts of Charles II. and George I. requiring all Members of both Houses to take the oaths, and repeat and subscribe the Declaration, were enacted to prevent crude innovations in religion and government. The Test and Corporation Acts he styles the bulwarks of the Constitution, and states, that they were enacted to secure the established Church against perils from nonconformists of all

denominations, among which he particularly enumerates *Papists*. (See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 158, and vol. iv. p. 57, 8vo. edit.)

It is now time to advert to the conditions of Union between England and Scotland, and between Great Britain and Ireland, which relate to the Church establishment; and to inquire whether the present measure can be adopted consistently with the obligation of these conditions, and the preservation of the public faith.

In the Act of Union of England and Scotland, the fifth of Ann, ch. 8, two acts of the respective Parliaments of England and Scotland, for the unalterable security of their respective Church establishments, are recited: that of England being for effectually and unalterably securing the true Protestant religion, professed and established by law in the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof. The English acts of uniformity of Elizabeth and Charles II. and *all other acts then in force* (among the rest, the thirtieth of Charles II. before mentioned), *for the preservation of the Church of England*, are declared perpetual: and it is enacted, that every subsequent King and Queen shall take an oath inviolably to maintain the same within England, *Ireland*, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed. And it is further enacted, that these two acts shall for ever be observed as *fundamental and essential conditions of the Union*.

On these conditions of the Treaty of Union Judge Blackstone makes these observations: "That whatever else may be deemed fundamental and essential conditions, the preservation of the two churches of England and Scotland, in the same state they were in at the time of the Union, is expressly declared so to be; and that therefore any alterations in the constitutions of either of these Churches, would be an infringement of these fundamental and essential conditions." The fifth article of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland is in the following terms: "That it be the fifth article of Union, that the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland; and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said United Church shall be and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and that the continuance and preservation of the said United Church, as the established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union: and that in like manner the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland shall remain, and be preserved, as the same are now established by law; and by the Act of the Union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland."

It is clear that every measure tending to the breach of these fundamental and essential conditions of the two Unions ought to be rejected by this House with indignation: the very proposal of such a measure to this House is an insult to it; as it must be founded on the presumption, that this House is capable of violating the public faith reciprocally plighted by the nations composing the British empire to each other, on their consolidation into one body. If this measure should be adopted, the act of the 30th of Charles II, requiring all Members of both Houses to take the Oath of Supremacy, and repeat and subscribe the Declaration, will be repealed by its adoption, as well as the Bill of Rights and the Test and Corporation Acts: these are made perpetual by the conditions of the Union of England and Scotland, being enacted for the preservation and continuance of the Church of England; and, as Judge Blackstone expresses it, for the prevention of crude innovations in religion and government. Exclusive of this direct breach of the conditions of the Union, it is already shewn, that the whole tendency of the measure, and its notorious consequences, are, the subversion of the established Church in Great Britain and Ireland, in violation of the public faith plighted on the completion of two incorporating Unions; the introduction of infidelity and atheism, by the annihilation of all the bonds of society springing from an established

religion; and the consequent introduction of anarchy and democracy—the true reason (however disguised under the mask of liberality) why this desolating, faithless, Gallic measure has met the approbation, and acquired the patronage and support of all the Jacobins in the British empire.

It is some consolation to reflect that the subjects of this empire, attached to the constitution, have yet one barrier left to resist that inundation of impiety, democracy, and barbarity, with which this measure is calculated to overwhelm it: that is, his Majesty's Coronation Oath; a barrier, I am convinced, sufficient to defend us, during the precious life at least, of the pious and conscientious Prince who now sways the British sceptre; a barrier raised by the wisdom, piety, and patriotism of our forefathers.

The oath enjoined by the statute of the first of William and Mary, to be taken by the King at his coronation, has the following clause: "I will to the *utmost of my power* maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law." By the Act of Ann ratifying the Union of England and Scotland, as is already stated, it is enacted, "that two Acts of the respective Parliaments of England and Scotland, for the unalterable security of their respective Church establishments therein recited, shall be perpetual;"

and in both of these recited acts, an addition is made to the Coronation Oath; and it is enacted, “that the succeeding Kings of Great Britain shall, at their coronations, swear to maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, as specified in that statute, for the unalterable security of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as in that Act specified, within the kingdoms of England and *Ireland*, the dominion of Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, and the territories thereunto belonging.” A similar oath is prescribed to be taken at the coronation by all succeeding Kings, for the inviolable preservation of the then established religion in Scotland. The Coronation Oath not only binds the King to refuse his assent to any alteration in the religions of England, *Ireland*, and Scotland, as they were established at the time of the Union of England and Scotland, but he is equally bound to refuse his assent to any measure, directly tending to the subversion of the religion then established; and also to discountenance, as far as in him lies, all attempts of that nature.

The patrons of this measure, sensible of this impediment, have not been wanting in their endeavours, by sophistical arguments, casuistical distinctions, misrepresentations of some facts, suppression of others, and suggestion of falsehoods, in pamphlets and newspapers, to sap the founda-

tion of this barrier, which they were unable to surmount. One pamphlet of this nature deserves particular notice, inasmuch as it is an epitome of all the arguments against the obligation of the Coronation Oath; and is launched into the world under the name of a gentleman, whom I understand to be a person of some reputation, as a lawyer and conveyancer, and of the Roman Catholic persuasion. It is entitled, *A Letter to a Nobleman on the proposed Repeal of the penal Laws which now remain in force against the Irish Roman Catholics, from Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn, Author of the Notes and Annotations on Coke on Littleton.* This pamphlet, after stating, that the author is less acquainted with the Irish Popery laws than with the English (which is indeed sufficiently manifested by its contents), proceeds to give what it styles an outline of them; but in truth it is an odious, monstrous, and detestable caricatura of the provisions and effects of the Irish Popery Acts of the 2d and 8th of Queen Ann. *The whole scope of these two wise and provident statutes was to prevent Romanists from acquiring landed property in Ireland,* their antecedent rebellions and barbarous massacres of the Protestants of Ireland having rendered such a prohibition at that time not only expedient, but absolutely necessary. The pamphlet admits, that these Acts are now repealed, but the caricatura is inserted by way of ornament to the subsequent

argument against the obligation of the Coronation Oath, the main drift of the pamphlet. The pamphlet then praises the loyalty of the Irish Romanists in the course of the war; and states that of the five Directors of the United Irish only one was a Romanist; but it should at the same time have stated, as the truth is, that the other four were desperate Jacobins and Infidels, with which species of people the Irish rebels had closely connected themselves; and that nearly the whole mass of Irish traitors which broke out into open rebellion in the year 1798 were Romanists, not one in five hundred of them being of any other religious persuasion; and that they massacred in cold blood all the Protestants, men, women, and children, who fell into their hands; giving no other reason for their barbarity, than that the victims were Protestants and heretics. It appears from some passages in the pamphlet, that it was written and published since the year 1798. In that year burst forth the last rebellion of the Irish Romanists, and the barbarous massacre of their Protestant countrymen. The Reports of the Committees of the English and Irish Houses of Commons have been some years published: the conspiracy for rebellion, and the dreadful and dangerous mutiny of the Irish Romanists in the British fleet, are fully exposed in these Reports; yet the author of the pamphlet has the confidence to praise the loyalty of the Irish Romanists, and to

state, that in the late invasions of Ireland, none were more active in repelling the invaders, and that among the men of influence and property, who were engaged in the rebellion, three Catholics cannot be mentioned. There was but one invasion of Ireland during the last war, that conducted by Humbert, at the head of one thousand French troops. He landed in a part of Ireland, in which the bulk of the inhabitants were Romanists, who joined him in a mass on his landing; at his first encounter with the King's troops, the greater part of a regiment of Irish militia, all Romanists, deserted to him; all the Romanists of influence or property within the districts adjacent to his quarters, joined him. What then could induce the author to praise the loyalty of the Irish Romanists? He states that if the Irish Romanists did not flock to the standard of Britain, frightful indeed would be the solitude of her camps and her fleets. Poor Britain! Irish Romanists, according to this pamphlet, are your only defenders! The author means to insinuate, that all the Irish serving in the British fleets and armies are Romanists, whereas not one half of them are so. And it is certain, that the Protestants of Great Britain and Ireland would furnish sufficient armies and fleets, if Romanists were entirely excluded. Since the mutiny in the fleet, the recruiting officers for some time refused to enlist any Irish Romanists for the marine service. The

degree of merit of a Romish common soldier, serving under Protestant officers in an army, nine tenths of the common soldiers of which are Protestants, in countries remote from his native land, removed from the baneful influence of his priests, and subject to military discipline, is so minute, that its value is not easily appreciated. He enlists for the bounty; he is paid for, and obliged to perform his allotted service. The author of the pamphlet either did or did not know of the already mentioned rebellion and mutiny, when he published his praises of the loyalty of the Irish Romanists: in the first case, he seems to be deficient in candour; in the other, in information. The pamphlet then states, that the Roman Catholics acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, but to a man deny his right to temporal power. It can be hardly supposed, that the author, if he be a lawyer, can be ignorant, that the wisest and most sagacious statesmen and legislators cannot separate a vast portion of temporal influence, authority, and power, from the supremacy in spirituals; their adhesion is indissoluble, they must for ever accompany each other.

It is now time to advert to the principal argument in the pamphlet, that the King is not by his Coronation Oath bound to resist the adoption of the present measure: this the author rests on the clause in that oath, which binds his Majesty "to

govern the people according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the realm." The author then gives a mutilated extract from the next clause, to wit, that His Majesty swears "to maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law *," and adverts only to the Coronation Oath as settled by the 1st of William and Mary, without at all adverting to the additions made to that oath by 5th of Ann, or the Act of Union between England and Scotland. He then draws the following conclusion from these garbled premises, that the last clause can only mean the Protestant reformed religion, *as from time to time, under the legislation of Parliament, it should be the Church establishment of the country*: that, as to the constitutional interpretation of the clause, it would be absurd in the extreme, unconstitutional, and perhaps even *treasonable*, to contend that the last clause precludes His Majesty from concurring with both Houses of Parliament in any legislative act whatsoever; and even if it did preclude him from such a concurrence, it would be no objection to his repealing the laws remaining in force against the Irish Romanists, as the repeal of them will not interfere with the legal establishment of the Church, with any part of the hierarchy, or with any of its tem-

* For Coronation Oath, as settled by the act of 1st William and Mary, see Blackstone's Commentaries, octavo edit. 1st vol. pages 228, 229.

poral or spiritual rights and privileges. I have already remarked the disingenuity of the author of the pamphlet in respect to his garbled quotations of the Coronation Oath, and his total omission of the additions made to it, by the Act of Union of England and Scotland, by which the King is obliged to swear at his coronation, to maintain and preserve inviolably the Church of England, the Act of Uniformity, and all acts in force at the time of that Union, for the perpetual preservation of the Church of England in its doctrine, worship, discipline, and government (the act already mentioned of the 30th of Charles II. among the rest, whereby all Members of both Houses of Parliament are bound to take the oaths previous to their sitting or voting in the Houses), as it stood at the time of the union of England and Scotland, and consequently not to make or consent to the making any alteration in its doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, as it then stood. But the first deduction of the author from the clauses in the Coronation Oath, as partially quoted by him, that they can only mean, *the Protestant reformed religion, as from time to time, under the legislation of Parliament, it should be the Church establishment of the country*, is founded on a sophism, to wit, the fraudulent assumption, that bills depending in Parliament, and which have perhaps passed the two Houses, are acts of Parliament or statutes. The King, by

his Coronation Oath, is bound to govern his people according to the *statutes* in Parliament agreed on (that is, agreed on by King, Lords, and Commons, the King in his legislative capacity being an integral part of the Parliament), but not according to bills depending in Parliament, and which may perhaps have been agreed on by a majority of the Members of the two Houses of Parliament; for such bills are not laws nor statutes, nor in any manner binding on prince or people, till they have been agreed to by the monarch, and received the royal assent, without which they become waste paper.

It is sincerely to be hoped, that there will be such harmony always subsisting between the King and both Houses of Parliament, that no bill will be ever offered to His Majesty for his assent, which he shall deem it expedient to reject; especially such bills, as he is bound by his Coronation Oath, and by the express conditions of the two Unions consolidating the British empire, to reject. But I cannot agree with the doctrine of some bold innovators on the British Constitution, who have asserted, that the King is bound to assent to every bill which has passed through the two Houses of Parliament. Such doctrine is, in my opinion (to use the words of the author of the pamphlet), absurd in the extreme, unconstitutional, and perhaps even *treasonable*; as it teaches, that the King in his legislative capacity is a mere cipher. If

(which God forbid!) the two Houses of Parliament should pass a bill containing clauses in direct contradiction to His Majesty's Coronation Oath, and in violation of the articles of the two incorporating Unions of England and Scotland, and of Great Britain and Ireland, and tender such a bill to His Majesty for the royal assent, who will assert that His Majesty is bound to give that assent in violation of his Coronation Oath, and the public faith? Such a crisis I have the firmest hope will never happen; if it should, I have no difficulty in asserting, that the King is bound by every principle of religion, and by every true principle of the Constitution, to refuse his assent; though by such assertion, I incur the guilt of treason in the opinion of the *Annotator on Coke on Littleton!* I acknowledge no power, in either or both Houses of Parliament, of dispensing with the obligation of lawful, positive, solemn oaths. I will not admit, that any man, or body of men, on the face of the earth, is invested with such a power. King James II. was chased from his throne for attempting to dispense with the laws of the land; what punishment is too great for those who would attempt to dispense with the laws of God? Leave such doctrine to Romanists and the Court of Rome! 't is not a Protestant doctrine!

It may not be improper to observe here, that in the purest era of the Constitution in the reign of William III. the royal assent to bills which had

passed both Houses of Parliament has been more than once refused by the Sovereign. In 1693, that King refused his assent to a bill to render all Members of the House of Commons incapable of places of trust and profit: the Commons, in their resolution on that occasion, state that the royal assent had been refused to several public bills, and by that King in particular*.

The author of the pamphlet asserts, that the repeal of all the laws complained of by Romanists would not interfere with the Church establishment, or with any of its temporal rights and privileges. I trust it has been already proved, that though the present measure, if adopted, would not be immediately attended by the subversion of the present Church establishment, yet the subversion of that, as well as of the civil establishment, would be the certain, and not very remote consequence of such adoption.

The author of the pamphlet then puts the following query: "What system of casuistry made it lawful for His Majesty to assent to the repeal of the large proportion of penal laws, repealed by the acts of 1788, 1782, and 1793, and now makes it unlawful for him to assent to the repeal of *the small proportion of those laws yet remaining unre-*

* Harris's Life of William III. page 398.—William refused his assent, in 1695, to another bill for the further regulation of elections of Members to serve in Parliament. Ibid. p. 437.— See also Commons' Journals.

pealed; or, that made it lawful for him to sanction a partial repeal of the Test Act in 1782, and makes it unlawful for him to sanction a *total* repeal of it in 1801?" To this question it is answered, that the repeal of the parts of the Popery code (which the pamphlet styles *penal* laws, but which are in fact *remedial* laws only) at the periods mentioned, does not confer any very considerable portion of *political* power on the Romish sect even in Ireland; and the repeal cannot be followed by consequences subversive of the Constitution in church and state; and therefore His Majesty might give the royal assent to such repeal consistently with the obligations of his Coronation Oath. The partial repeal of the Test Act exempts Romanists in Ireland from the necessity of taking the Oath of Supremacy, and receiving the Sacrament, on their appointment to places, and becoming members of corporations; but all places in the department of which the executive power and authority of the state are lodged, and all offices in corporations, are yet reserved and excepted from their grasp, unless they perform the usual requisites of all others His Majesty's subjects on their attainment of such places and offices. The author of the pamphlet is desirous that these reservations and exceptions should be repealed, and styles them a *small* proportion of the Popery code yet remaining: it may be admitted that they are small in bulk, but very great indeed they are.

in importance. On the continuance and perpetuity of them depend the continuance and perpetuity of the Constitution in church and state. Are these matters of trifling moment? What commandant of a strong and important fortress, the chief defence of a kingdom, would be justified in the surrender of it to a cruel, merciless, and unrelenting enemy, because it was deemed advisable, for the better defence of the place, to slight some weak and unimportant outwork, and permit the foe to possess themselves of it?

The author, after the preceding train of reasoning, seems to abandon it all for the purpose of introducing one conclusive argument against the obligation of the Coronation Oath, which he deems irrefragable. "All this discussion," says he, "is superfluous;—the Coronation Oath was fixed in Ireland by the first of William and Mary; at that time Roman Catholic Peers had their seats, and voted in the House of Lords; Roman Catholic Commoners were eligible to the House of Commons; and all civil and military offices were open to Roman Catholics: they were deprived of these rights by the acts of the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, and the 1st and 2d of Queen Ann. Now the Coronation Oath can only refer to the system of law which was in force when the act which prescribed it was passed; but the Irish laws meant to be repealed are subsequent to that

act; to these laws therefore, or to any similar laws, the Coronation Oath cannot be referred."

Before I expose the absolute errors in fact in the premises from which the author deduces his conclusion, I will examine the justice of the conclusion, supposing the premises to be true. The Coronation Oath of the 1st of William and Mary binds the King "*to the utmost of his power to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law.*" Shortly after the accession of William and Mary, it was deemed necessary to add further fortifications to the established religion by statute in Ireland. The Test and Corporation Acts passed in England in the reign of Charles II. and in the 30th year of the same King's reign, the act passed enjoining the taking the Oath of Supremacy, and repeating and subscribing the Declaration, by all Members of both Houses of Parliament, previous to their sitting or voting in either House: by the Coronation Oath, as settled by the 1st of William and Mary, the King swears, that he will *to the utmost of his power* maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law; the obligation of this oath extends to *Ireland*, so that he is bound to the utmost of his power to maintain it in Ireland, as well as in England, as then established in England by law; and all the barriers for its support erected in England previous to the 1st of William and Mary. The English

Parliament in the 3d and 4th of William and Mary passed an act enjoining all Members of both Houses of Parliament in Ireland to take the Oath of Supremacy, and repeat and subscribe the Declaration, the Parliament of England at that time exercising the power of binding Ireland by its acts; not for the purpose of making any addition to, or alteration in the Protestant religion established by law in that kingdom, but to give that establishment an additional security. How then does it follow from the premises laid down by the author of the pamphlet, that His present Majesty or any future King of Great Britain and Ireland, having taken the aforesaid Coronation Oath of the 1st of William and Mary, can, consistently with that oath, consent to the repeal of the aforesaid English statute of the 30th of Charles II. or the above-mentioned statute of the 3d and 4th of William and Mary? His present Majesty swore to maintain *to the utmost of his power* the Church established by law in England and *Ireland*, as he found it established by law, at the time of his accession, and not as it was established by law in the 1st of William and Mary; though in fact it is the very same Church, which was established by law in England and Ireland at that time, and which has received an additional barrier in Ireland since, by the enactment of the said English statute of the 3d and 4th of William and Mary for that country. I apprehend I have taken up too much

time in refuting this absurd argument ; and shall only further observe, that it is not creditable to an *Annotator on Coke on Littleton* to support the cause of his party by the quibbling of special pleading*.

It is necessary however to make a few remarks on what the author has adduced as facts to support his argument. He states that the Coronation Oath was fixed in Ireland by the 1st of William and Mary ; true it is, it was fixed as well for England as Ireland, by the English statute of the 1st of William and Mary ; but the author has totally omitted to state the additions to the Coronation Oath introduced by the Act of Union of England and Scotland, the 5th of Ann. By this Act the King is obliged at his coronation to “swear (as is already noticed) to maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, *as specified in that statute*, for the unalterable security of that Church, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as in that statute specified, within the kingdoms of England and *Ireland*, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed.” The statute particularly specifies, that the Act of Uniformity, *und all other acts for the perpetual preservation of the Church of England* (among which are the aforesaid English act of the

* This answer to the above-mentioned argument of the pamphlet receives additional strength (if any addition is necessary) by the Union of Great Britain and Ireland since the publication of the pamphlet.

30th of Charles II. enacted for Ireland in the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, and the Test and Corporation Acts), shall be unalterable and perpetual. The author was either ignorant of these additions to the Coronation Oath, or designedly omitted them: if inserted, they would have completely overturned his quibbling argument, that the King is not bound by his Coronation Oath, to resist the repeal of any law for the support of the established Church, which was not a law at the time the Coronation Oath was fixed; - for the aforesaid additions were made to the Coronation Oath by the 5th of Ann, many years subsequent to the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, and also subsequent to the 1st and 2d of Ann; by which acts, he states, that Romanists were deprived of their rights to seats and votes in the Houses of Lords and Commons in Ireland. He admits also, that the Coronation Oath refers to that system of law which was in force, when the acts which prescribed it were passed; that is, that the King cannot conscientiously consent to the repeal of any of the acts for the perpetual security of the established Church which had passed previously to the fixing of the Coronation Oath: that oath was ultimately fixed by the 5th of Ann; and therefore of the author's own shewing, the King cannot conscientiously consent to the repeal of the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, or to that of the 1st and 2d of Ann, so far as they enjoin the taking of the Oath

of Supremacy and the repetition and subscription of the Declaration by all Members previous to their sitting and voting in either of the Houses.

The author states, that at the accession of William and Mary, Roman Catholic Peers had their seats, and voted in the House of Lords; Roman Catholic Commoners were *eligible* to the House of Commons; and all civil and military offices were open to Roman Catholics. In respect to Roman Catholic Peers, I am not sufficiently conversant in the Journals of the Irish House of Lords to ascertain, whether *Romish* Peers were, or were not, excluded from seats or votes in that House, unless they took the Oath of Supremacy, previous to the 3d and 4th of William and Mary; they certainly were not so excluded by any Irish statute: but very few such Irish Peers could have sat in Parliament in Ireland, from the Restoration to the 3d and 4th of William and Mary (excepting in the *Romish* mob assembled in Dublin by King James II. after his abdication, and by him and themselves styled a Parliament); for the *Romish* Peerage in Ireland was not numerous previous to the year 1641; and almost the whole of them were attainted as traitors, having joined in that wicked *Romish* rebellion, and massacre of the Irish Protestants, which broke out and commenced in the year 1641, and the remainder for their rebellion in 1689, 1690, and 1691. The author displays much artifice in his assertion respecting

Romish Commoners: he states that previous to the accession of William and Mary, and till the 3d and 4th years of their reign, they were *eligible* to seats in Parliament; they certainly were so, and are so still, and may occupy these seats, and vote in the House of Commons, provided they will take the oaths prescribed to be taken, not by them particularly, but by all His Majesty's subjects sitting and voting in the House of Commons: but the idea the author means to convey to his readers is, that Romanists, antecedent to the 1st of William and Mary, were capable of occupying seats in the Irish House of Commons, and did sit therein, without taking any oaths whatsoever, particularly the Oath of Supremacy. This is a gross misstatement. By a resolution of the Irish House of Commons in the year 1642 *, all the Members were obliged to take the Oath of Supremacy, or to vacate their seats. By another resolution of the Irish House of Commons in the year 1661, all the Members were obliged to take the Oath of Supremacy and the Oath of Allegiance of the 3d of James I. and receive the Sacrament according to the usage of the Church established, or to vacate their seats. The Commons in the first Parliament assembled in Ireland after the accession of William and Mary, in the 3d and 4th year of their reign,

* See the Journals of the Irish House of Commons, vol. i. page 434. Ibid. page 568. Vol. ii. page 443.

immediately on their meeting, and before they proceeded to any business whatsoever, took the Oaths of Supremacy, Allegiance, and repeated and subscribed the Declaration, deeming the resolutions of the Commons before mentioned, and the English act of the 30th of Charles II. imperative upon them: so that the idea that any Member could sit in the Irish House of Commons at all times previous to the accession of William and Mary, or to the third and fourth years of their reign, without taking the Oath of Supremacy; or that Irish Romanists were, for the first time, abridged of that alleged right, by the English act of the 3d and 4th of William and Mary, is erroneous; they were, long before that period, abridged of it by the resolutions of the House of Commons, warranted by the law of Parliament, part of the law of the land, under which that House has claimed and exercised the power of judging of the qualifications of its own Members.

The author's assertion, that all civil and military offices in Ireland were open to Roman Catholics, previous to the accession of William and Mary, smells of the same artifice with his former assertion respecting the *eligibility* of Romanists to be Members of the House of Commons: it is true that such offices were then open to Romanists (as they now are), if they performed the acts required to be performed by all His Majesty's

subjects appointed to such offices; but what he means to insinuate is, that Romanists, till the accession of William and Mary, and till the third and fourth years of their reign, might enjoy all such offices in Ireland, without taking the oaths, &c.; this assertion, in such sense, is as groundless as any other in the pamphlet; for no person in Ireland could enjoy any such offices, without taking the Oath of Supremacy, as enjoined to be taken by the Irish act of the 2d of Elizabeth; by the universal rejection of which oath Romanists disable themselves to hold or enjoy such offices. The cautious, artificial manner in which the pamphlet attempts to convey to the reader, the periods of Romish exclusion from the Houses of Parliament, induces a belief, that the author, at the time of writing the pamphlet, was not ignorant of the resolutions of the Irish House of Commons just mentioned, nor of the Irish act of the 2d of Elizabeth; and if he was not, what opinion must the public entertain of his candour!

The author cannot resort to the unlawful and riotous assembly convoked at Dublin, in the year 1689, by King James II. after his abdication, and by him honoured with the title of a Parliament, in proof of his assertions; it consisted almost entirely of Romanists, unlawfully elected, after he had destroyed all the Protestant corporations, and driven out of the country, or into the Pro-

testant armies, almost the whole of the Protestant nobility and gentry; and after he had himself ceased to be a king, and had therefore no power to convoke a Parliament. By Act of Parliament in the reign of William and Mary, this mock Parliament was declared to be an unlawful assembly, and all its acts and proceedings were condemned to the flames, and were publicly burned and destroyed accordingly.

I trust I have demonstrated to the House, that the doctrines, political, moral, and religious, contained in the Petition, and stated to be the principles inculcated by the Roman Catholic religion, are diametrically opposite to the principles taught and inculcated by the canons, decrees of general councils, by all writers, lay and cleric, of the greatest authority amongst the Romanists, and adopted by the universal practice of their Church from the date of the Council of Lateran to the present day; and that their modern writers, such as Dr. Troy and Mr. Plowden, assert, "that the religious principles of Roman Catholics being *unchangeable*, they are applicable to all times; and that if any one says, or pretends to insinuate, that the modern Roman Catholics differ in one iota from their ancestors, he either deceives himself or wishes to deceive others; and that *semper eadem* is emphatically descriptive of their religion."

It has been urged in this debate, that the establishment by the British Government of the Roman Catholic religion in Canada, furnishes a reason for establishing it in the remainder of the British empire, because it has not been productive of any bad effects there. It is rather premature to form any decided opinion of what effects may hereafter flow from such establishment; but even supposing that the effects of such establishment may hereafter be found to be prejudicial to the British Government there, yet the establishment of it in Canada was a matter of necessity and not of choice; for Canada surrendered to the British arms upon express stipulated conditions; one of which was, that the Roman Catholic religion, which was professed by that country before the conquest by the British arms, should be for ever preserved inviolate; and Britain, ever faithful to her treaties, was thus obliged to establish the Roman Catholic religion in that province. As to the fidelity of the Canadians during the American war, it may be accounted for also by necessity on their side: their communication with Europe is by the river St. Lawrence, which is open to navigation for six months in the year only; for the other six months it is blockaded by ice. Britain, in case of rebellion of the Canadians, could cut off all communication with Europe by a few ships stationed in the river St. Lawrence; and the Canadians cannot at present

subsist without European commodities, and with these they could not be furnished from the United States without great difficulty and intolerable expense, besides infinite risk and hazard.

The Hon. Member who has introduced this motion, has argued in favour of the motion from the great number of Romanists in Ireland; and, to strengthen his argument, he has represented them, in the course of his speech, sometimes to amount to four millions, sometimes to three millions; but in the whole course of his reasoning he has never mentioned the Irish Protestants, but has endeavoured to impress on the Members of this House, unacquainted with Ireland, that all its inhabitants, with a few trifling exceptions, are Romanists. To expose the errors of the Hon. Gentleman in this particular, it is necessary to state, that a calculation of the number of the inhabitants of Ireland was made in the year 1692, after the Revolution war, and that they then amounted to one million two hundred thousand only. Another calculation was made in the year 1731, as Dr. Burke, Romish Titular Bishop of Ossory, has informed us, in his *Hibernia Dominicana*; and he states, that there were then found to be in Ireland seven hundred thousand four hundred and fifty-three Protestants, and one million three hundred and nine thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight Romanists; so that in 1731 the Romanists of Ireland did not exceed the Pro-

testants in the proportion of two to one. Dr. Burke published his book in 1762, and he makes bitter complaints, that the proportion of the inhabitants of Ireland had increased greatly on the Protestant side in the interval between 1731 and 1762: it may from hence be fairly deduced, that the Romanists of Ireland are not, at this day, in the proportion of two to one to the Protestants of Ireland. From the best calculations lately made, it appears that the whole inhabitants of Ireland do not now exceed three millions; and it may be fairly deduced, that one million two hundred thousand of these are Protestants, the persons so much contemned by the Hon. Mover, that, when speaking of the inhabitants of Ireland, he does not even condescend to mention them; and if all the inhabitants of the British islands amount to sixteen millions, then the Romanists do not exceed one eighth part of that population. It is notorious, that the Romish inhabitants of Ireland do not possess one fortieth part of the real and personal property of that country, nor one thousandth part of the property of the United Kingdom: in fact, they compose the mob and the beggary of Ireland, and are not of consequence enough, either in numbers, wealth, or power, to demand (as this Petition does) the subversion of the Constitution in church and state, and the destruction of the Protestants of Ireland, for their gratification.

There is an argument advanced in the Petition for the grant of the representative franchise to Romanists, from the elective franchise being conceded to them in Ireland. I trust that I have already shewn to this House, that the grant of the representative franchise to Romanists would be attended by the subversion of the Constitution in church and state; and that therefore their enjoyment of the elective franchise is so far from being an argument for conceding to them the representative franchise, that their demand of the representative franchise, grounded upon their enjoyment of the elective franchise, is a strong and powerful argument for depriving them of the elective franchise: because, by their mode of argument, the enjoyment of the elective franchise entitles them to a privilege which would be subversive of the Constitution in church and state.

It is much safer for a Romish government, even a popular one, to admit Protestants into places of trust and power, than for a Protestant government to admit Romanists; because Protestants hold no doctrine as a point of faith hostile to the independence of the state of which they are subjects; but Romanists do.

The plea, that the measure is necessary to reconcile a considerable share of our population to the Government, is absurd; for people who maintain, as a point of faith, that the state is subject to a foreign jurisdiction, and is not independent,

can never be reconciled to the state till they renounce so anarchical and degrading a tenet; they must be always enemies to it; and giving them political power, is furnishing them with the means of overturning the Constitution.

The mob, and the indigent part of the population of a state (as the Romanists of Ireland), ought not to be gratified at the expense of the ruin of the loyal, opulent, and respectable part of the state. If the contrary conduct shall be pursued, agrarian laws and the system of equality must be adopted in every state; because the indigent in every state compose the bulk of the population, and are desirous of degrading and plundering the great and rich in every state, as well as in Ireland.

To sum up all the arguments against this measure, the laws enjoining the taking the Oath of Supremacy are not restrictive nor exclusive laws, in respect to any class of people in the community except to traitors, because it is merely an oath of allegiance to the state. No subject, refusing it, should be admitted to the functions of a legislator, or to any place of trust and power in the state. To use the words of a great Minister of State, in the debate in 1790, on the attempt to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, "Persons professing modes of belief which endanger the welfare of the society of which they are members, should be excluded from possessing

the authority of the state; and here such line of exclusion should be drawn*." The Romanists in the British empire (but particularly in Ireland) enjoy a complete toleration and liberty of conscience. To use the words of the same great Minister again on the same occasion, "Toleration consists in a free exercise of religion according to the tenets of the professors of that religion, and in the enjoyment of the protection of the laws; not in a communication of an equality of political power, †." And in combating the arguments made use of on that occasion he used the following expressions: "Even *Papists*, acknowledging the supremacy of a foreign ecclesiastical prince, must, by such arguments, be admitted to offices of power and trust." Indeed every argument he made use of on that occasion, can be used with signal strength and effect against the present measure.

The present measure, if adopted, would directly lead to the subversion of the Constitution in church and state, and let in an universal deluge of atheism, infidelity, democracy, and anarchy. The repeal of the laws enjoining the taking the Oath of Supremacy, would be a constructive admission of the justice of the claim of the supremacy of the Pope.

* Historical Register, 1790, p. 14, Mr. Pitt's Speech.

† Parliamentary Debates, vol. xxvii. p. 209.

The adoption of this measure would be a violation of the conditions of the two Unions of England and Scotland, and of Great Britain and Ireland, and a notorious breach of the public faith.

The adoption of the measure would tend to a violation of the Coronation Oath; it cannot therefore be supposed that His Majesty will ever agree to it: the tendering a bill to him for the Royal assent, to carry this measure into effect, would be an insult to him.

For all these reasons I shall give my hearty negative to the motion.

THE END.

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